

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – April 4, 2001

**State leaders announce this year's Washington Scholars**

**OLYMPIA** – State leaders today announced this year's Washington Scholars, 147 high school seniors who have demonstrated outstanding academic achievement, leadership ability, and community service.

The Washington Scholars program, administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) in cooperation with the Washington Association of Secondary School Principals, honors the accomplishments of three high school seniors from each of the 49 legislative districts in the state. Washington Scholars receive state grants equivalent to up to four years of undergraduate resident tuition that can be used at any Washington public or independent college or university.

"These are extraordinary young people who excel not only in academics, but also the arts, sports, and community service," said HECB Executive Director Marc Gaspard. "They have tutored elementary school children, performed at Carnegie Hall, and worked in orphanages in India and the Ukraine." This year's winners include nearly 80 student government officers, seven Eagle Scouts, and two recipients of the Girl Scout Gold/Silver award.

High school principals nominated the top one percent of the graduating senior class. A selection committee then winnowed the list to the top four students, naming three Scholars and one Scholar Alternate in each legislative district. More than 640 students were nominated.

"We applaud the Washington Scholars for their commitment to excellence and service to their schools and communities," said Brian Barker of the Washington Association of Secondary School Principals. "With so many outstanding student nominees, it was difficult to select only three from each district."

State leaders will honor the Scholars at a recognition luncheon in Olympia on May 2.

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